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The employment of soft paraffin in order to make the sections adhere, as described by Schönland, is quite unnecessary, as the sections adhere perfectly without this; indeed, it is much easier to get a good ribbon of sections without the soft paraffin than with it, owing to the difficulty of perfectly removing the surplus soft paraffin.—DOUGLAS H. CAMPBELL, *Berlin*.

Rules for the Botanical Exchange Club.—It having been decided to organize the American Botanical Exchange in connection with the national herbarium in the Department of Agriculture, the botanist of the department will act as director of the Exchange, and the following rules will be followed in its management until further notice:

1. Persons desiring specimens are required to contribute a number regarded as equivalent in value to those called for. The specimens wanted in return may be selected when the others are sent or at any time afterward.

2. The number of the specimens returned will be at the discretion of the director, and will depend on the rarity and condition of those furnished. In the case of well known plants they will probably nearly equal the number sent.

3. In the case of small plants, several specimens should be furnished under one number, as in such cases a single specimen is not a satisfactory representation of the species.

4. Specimens may be called for by species or genera, or by the locality from which they are wanted. To save time the species may be indicated by the numbers which they bear in any well known American catalogue, the name and the edition of the catalogue being given.

5. Specimens sent must be accurately named, and bear the date and locality of collecting, with the name of collector. Little value will be attached to specimens which are imperfect or poorly prepared.

6. The director of the Exchange will reserve the right to indicate his judgment in cases where specimens seem improperly named; but the responsibility of the names will in other cases rest with the original sender.

7. Well prepared specimens of all flowering plants and vascular cryptogams will be received, and also specimens of thallophytes, the last mentioned to be under the charge of the Chief of the section of Vegetable Pathology. Hereafter lists will be published of plants especially desired, or of which no more specimens are needed.

8. An account of the specimens received from each person will be kept, and of those sent in return, and, also, of any other specimens which he desires or can supply. The Exchange will thus serve as a bureau of information upon this subject.

9. Conditions of membership: Any botanist may become a member of the Exchange Club by paying annually to the director the sum of two

dollars; this money to be used in payment for postage, printing and incidental expenses.

10. Address specimens and communications to the director of the Exchange.

Washington, D. C.

DR. GEO. VASEY,

Botanist, Department Agriculture.

EDITORIAL.

THE NOMENCLATURE of vascular plants seems to be in somewhat of a ferment. The law of priority every one recognizes, and that mile-stone in our progress has been passed long since. The application of the law is the question just now, and one that must be settled. The way of settling it is of far less importance than to have it settled. Fixity is what we must have, and we must have it even at the expense of some of our most cherished prejudices. Shall the law of priority apply only to the combined generic and specific name, or to the specific appellation as well? All of us have prejudices, backed by very good reasons as well as sentiment, in favor of one or the other of these views. But it will never do for us to go ahead in sublime indifference of each other. To what a chaotic state would such a proceeding lead? It is hardly the thing for a monographer to carefully study some group and publish his results in a paper in which relationships are the chief thing, and names of very minor importance; and then for some catalogue-maker to hunt through the synonymy and give different names to many of the plants in a publication in which names are the chief things. We must work together, or justice will never be done to those to whom justice is due. It has occurred to us that we could reach some uniformity of action, if not of opinion, that would save American botany at least from the chaos toward which it seems drifting. Prejudice and sentiment, and the names of plants, are all of so much less importance than uniformity that they ought to be laid aside for the sake of any sort of an agreement. Would it not be a feasible thing to have this subject discussed by the Botanical Club next August at Cleveland? Some plan might be devised by which the opinions of all working botanists could be obtained, and upon this basis some mutual understanding might be reached. At any rate, a full discussion would do no harm.

OPEN LETTERS.

The Exchange Club.

My attention has been called to an article of Mr. A. A. Crozier's in the last number of the GAZETTE, concerning the proposed Botanical Exchange. This article did not emanate from the committee. The objectionable point in the article seems to be an obscure intimation that under